



Finnish Degenerate Streamers as Representatives of Online Antihero Culture

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>Streaming, also referred to as vlogging, is the act of providing real-time video content over the internet. This activity encompasses numerous sub-genres such as video gaming and irl ("in real life"). Degenerate streaming is a new sub-genre often consisting of belligerent public behavior and drug abuse. Streamers sometimes receive monetary donations for their efforts from their audience. The actors taking part in this variety of streaming can be said to embody features of an antihero, a concept appearing in literature since antiquity. An antihero is a central character in a work of fiction who often lacks moral fortitude, resorting to dubious behavioral patterns in order to reach their goals.</p> <p>A dark triad personality is used in scientific literature to describe individuals with a history of psychopathic, opportunistic (i.e. Machiavellian), and narcissistic characteristics. This study frames the public personas of Finnish degenerate streamers as antiheroes in the context of the dark triad personality; their public communications are also analyzed within this framework.</p> <p>The topic is approached using a qualitative data-analysis of a total of 24 hours of degenerate streaming as well as with character typologies. The data-set consists of material created by five individual streamers. The main themes found in this material are identified and further categorized into sub-themes. In the analysis section of this study the life histories and potential root causes of degenerate streamers are discussed; a poor economical standing and mental health issues were identified as contributing factors. Some correlations with Finnish public political discourse are also suggested.</p> <p>This thesis contains descriptions of potentially upsetting events, such as domestic violence.</p>		
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Tiivistelmä Streaming, jota kutsutaan myös tubettamiseksi, viittaa reaaliaikaiseen videosisällön jakamiseen Internetissä. Tämä toiminta kattaa lukuisia alalajeja, kuten videopelit ja irl (“in real life” eli arkielämän videointi). Striimaajat saavat usein yleisöltään rahalahjoituksia ponnisteluistaan. Ns. <i>rappiotubetus</i> on streamingin uusi alalaji, joka koostuu usein julkisesta itsetuhoisesta käyttäytymisestä kuten päihteiden käytöstä. Tämän tyyppisen streaming-materiaalin tuottajien voidaan väittää edustavan antisankaruuden piirteitä. Antisankarin käsite on esiintynyt kirjallisuudessa antiikin ajoista lähtien. Tämä on kaunokirjallisuudessa keskeinen hahmo, jolla ei usein ole moraalista lujuutta ja joka käyttää arveluttavia käyttäytymismalleja saavuttaakseen tavoitteensa. Tieteellisessä kirjallisuudessa käytetään dark triad -käsitettä kuvaamaan yksilöitä, joilla on psykopaattisia, opportunistisia, ja narsistisia piirteitä. Tämä pro gradu kehystää suomalaisten rappiotubettajien julkiset persoonat antisankareiksi dark triad -persoonallisuuden piirteillä. Myös heidän julkinen viestintänsä käsitellään tässä kontekstissa. Aihetta lähestytään sekä kvalitatiivisella data-analyysillä yhteensä 24 tunnin rappiotubetus-suoratoistosta että hahmotypologioilla. Aineisto koostuu viiden yksittäisen striimaajan luomasta materiaalista. Tämän materiaalin pääteemat tunnistetaan ja luokitellaan edelleen osa-aiheiksi. Tutkimuksen analyysiosiossa käsitellään rappiotubettajien elämänhistoriaa ja toiminnan mahdollisia perimmäisiä syitä; huono taloudellinen asema ja mielenterveyden ongelmat tunnistettiin vaikuttaviksi tekijöiksi. Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma sisältää kuvauksia mahdollisesti järkyttävistä tapahtumista.		
Avainsanat antisankari, dark triad -persoonallisuus, pimeä kolminaisuus, syrjäytyminen, suoratoisto, vloggaus, köyhyys, youtube, rappiotubettaminen		
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1. Introduction

Streaming is the act of live video broadcasting on the internet, usually combined with a text-based component of interaction with an audience. The viewing audience for a typical stream usually ranges between a dozen to a hundred members, but can reach thousands of viewers per broadcast. Most active content-creators on live video platforms like *YouTube* and *Twitch* focus on technology, social issues, and entertainment. However, a new category of live video streaming has emerged in recent years which seems to be increasingly popular in Finland. A so-called *degenerate streamer* (*“rappiotubettaja”*) is typically a male between 20-50 years in age, unemployed, and has a substance abuse problem.

Degenerate streaming may be slowly becoming a part of the pop-culture vernacular. For example, participants in the Finnish 2020 edition of the Big Brother television show were known to use expressions coined by degenerate streamers, on occasion naming their originators as well. As of 2021 numerous online message boards (e.g., suomi24.fi and vauva.fi) contain hundreds of posts discussing local degenerate streaming scenes. There is a growing degree of general interest in this phenomenon as it features several potentially relatable themes. Degenerate streaming lifts the veil on some darker corners of society; it may inspire self-reflection among some vastly different parts of the Finnish populace.

An antihero is a protagonist who lacks moral fibre, but plays an important part in a story, often disregarding the prevailing societal norms along the way. A dark triad -personality consists of narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism. Narcissistic individuals often feel they are superior to others. Psychopathy is a well-researched set of personality traits consisting of low empathy, manipulativeness, impulsivity, and sometimes criminality as well. However, not all psychopaths display criminal behavior. Machiavellianism, coined after the 16th century diplomat Niccolò Machiavelli, basically refers to the approach that for an individual to gain power the end justifies the means; a Machiavellian person is cynical, opportunistic, and deceptive (Jonason et al., 2012).

Many popular fictional antihero-characters in current media embody dark triad personality characteristics (Jonason et al., 2012). Popular cinematic genres with a strong antihero-presence include gangster films (e.g. *The Godfather*), superhero films (e.g. *Batman*), war films, spy thrillers, and westerns.

Some degenerate streamers may display indicators of the dark triad personality, representing this phenomenon in a non-fictional context. A degenerate streamer therefore represents a type of online anti-hero for the 21st century. They provide potentially cathartic experiences for their audience, representing one ideal for our time. My intent is not to try to identify people with some specific personality characteristics. Instead I aim to include the concept of the dark triad personality in the thesis due to it often being a part of the popular anti-hero narrative.

The dark triad personality has been previously mentioned in the context of online communications as it manifests in vlogging activities on YouTube (e.g. Southard & Zeigler-Hill, 2016) and online harassment (e.g. Zhang & Zhao, 2020). However, the emerging phenomenon of degenerate streaming has not been researched so far.

Degenerate streaming is a unique form of public communication and the fact that a culture is being created around it with multiple types of actors/roles, has ramifications beyond simply being entertainment. I will identify and analyze these different roles found within the community using typologies. The research question for this thesis is as follows:

- Does the concept of the antihero manifest itself in the context of Finnish degenerate streamers and if so, to what degree do the public performances of these streamers embody the characteristics of the dark triad personality (and its associated fast life strategy)?

In addition, this thesis includes discussion on the potential reasons for a person to engage in degenerate streaming.

The closely related topic of "vlogging" (i.e. video blogging) has been researched previously. Talvitie-Lamberg focused on analyzing the content of "do it yourself" (DIY) streamers of YouTube and other platforms in her doctoral dissertation. Her aim was to study the confessional me-centered communications in this context. These findings demonstrate that "confessions need to be performed context-wise, strictly following the sociocultural, aesthetical, and technical constraints of a particular environment" (Talvitie-Lamberg, 2014, p. 186). These types of communications should be viewed as a free willing confessor performing one's own reality, building their social contacts; the shared performance is central to these proceedings (Talvitie-Lamberg, 2014).

I focused on five individuals with similar interests whom all represent the same community. This group uses YouTube as their main streaming platform. Their combined view-count is at least between 800 000 and one million views as of December 2020, spread over numerous channels and videos. I immersed myself in the online environment and remained open for establishing rapport, but refrained from directing the proceeding in any specific manner. This research uses the approach of critical cultural studies, leveraging a qualitative thematic analysis of a twenty-four hour dataset of degenerate streaming.

Unlike some other types of real-time video broadcasts, degenerate streamers provide more than pure entertainment. They produce potentially deeply personal social statements, acts which beg some exploration of the involved individuals' psyches. Therefore some of the tools provided by sociology are warranted for this research.

2. Literature and Concepts

In this section some of the most central concepts will be introduced, starting with the definition of the *antihero*. Other concepts defined in the section include the dark triad personality and life history theory; discussion will also follow as to how these two concepts are closely related and useful when describing degenerate streaming.

An antihero is central character in a work of fiction who often lacks the traditionally upheld heroic virtues (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The antihero has been used as a dramatic device since antiquity, appearing in early Greek literature such as *Argonautica*, better known as *Jason and the Argonauts*, by Apollonius of Rhodes. The concept of the antihero did not fade away, remaining popular during the European Renaissance era and beyond. Represented in the numerous works of poet-peer Lord Byron (1788-1824), a Byronic hero is often described as a defiant, belligerent type of protagonist likened to a classical anti-hero (Thorslev, 1962). The antihero has remained a popular literary and cinematic trope, providing a popular alternative to the purely heroic types of central characters, namely the protagonists, within works of fiction. Although a related concept, an antagonist is not the same as an antihero. Whereas both are morally flexible, antagonists are not the central figures within a story and exist solely to challenge them. Antiheroes can be framed in the context of the dark triad personality, which will be discussed later in this section.

2.1 The degenerate streamer telefetish

Due to its both electronic and interactive nature, online streaming differs radically from traditional forms of performance, such as theater and television. There is no question live degenerate streaming is a performative act. The streamers also present their public personas in front of an audience even when publishing pre-recorded content.

According to a paper by Pearson (2009) the emphasis on performance in previous literature has been on the embodied physical selves and spaces; in an online context

both the audience and the performers are presented in a disembodied state. Pearson states that assessing a performance requires examining some ambiguous factors, most importantly hierarchical relationships and values held by those participating in the exchange. However, a remote electronic performance may greatly blur the lines between personal and performative domains (Pearson, 2009).

The term *telefetish* refers to an idealized public persona of a video blogger or streamer; the end result of a telefetish is the fusion of the real and idealized selves (Hillis, 2009). In the case of degenerate streamers, many specific ideals may be present during video transmission. However, they tend to vastly differ from the most commonly encountered ideals of beauty and displays of wealth espoused by the typical vlogger. Whereas many lifestyle-vloggers present themselves fashionably dressed and in chic environments, a degenerate streamer focuses on displays of anti-social behavior in whatever they happen to be wearing.

As degenerate streamers often divulge swathes of personal information from medical diagnoses to their childhood experiences, their output can be considered confessional in nature. Confessional mediated communication has been previously described in a somewhat negative light in academic literature. In traditional media research (e.g. television and journalism) it has even been said to exploit both the performers and their audience (Dovey 2000; White 1992). This domain includes the popular reality television phenomenon of the early 2000s. When it comes to online interactions the academic stance is more positive. Personal, me-centered communications may generate enhanced social interactions for some (Hillis, 2009; Matikainen 2009; Senft, 2008; Hodgkinson, 2007; as cited in Lamberg 2014).

What is typically valued most in social media by its performers is engagement from the audience (Huberman et al., 2008). This can be quantified in the views, likes, and comments a video receives. In the case of degenerate streamers, attention from the audience is usually delivered at a constant low level in the form of the number of viewers and their chat messages. This attention grows during on-screen acts of emotional or physical conflict. These acts seem to be a high priority for some viewers.

2.2 The dark triad personality

According to Wright et al. (2017), "the dark triad is represented by three interrelated personality characteristics thought to share a 'dark core' — that is, to be associated with a range of negative outcomes." These three main characteristics of psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism found in a dark triad personality can be further classified into several sub-categories (D'Souza et al., 2019). Table 1 shows these personality-features as they most seem to manifest in degenerate streaming.

Trait	Psychopathy	Machiavellianism	Narcissism
Sub-traits	Risk-taking and impulsivity	Cynicism	Arrogance
	Low empathy	Amorality	Extroversion
	Aggressivity	Low moral standards	Dominance
	Absence of guilt	Absence of principles	Pursuit of attention
	Irresponsibility	Strategic calculation	Exploitation
	Present-orientation	Future-orientation	Grandiosity

Table 1. The three main traits in dark triad personality with some of their sub-traits (D'Souza et al., 2019).

According to Viding & Seara-Cardoso (2014), psychopathy is a personality disorder where an individual displays callousness and disregard for the safety and well-being of others. Psychopaths experience little or no remorse after committing anti-social acts. Such an individual is likely to have a low threshold for the use of physical or emotional violence; they are manipulative and thrill-seeking at high rates. Psychopathic traits are typically displayed early on in one's life (Viding & Seara-Cardoso, 2014).

Machiavellianism refers to behavioral patterns which aim to satisfy an individual's personal goals at nearly any expense. Machiavellians may resort to immoral actions such as stealing or lying when working towards their goals. Individuals with this personality feature also tend to be overtly critical and unsupportive of others. Although some overlap does exist between Machiavellianism and psychopathy, the

former does not predict a propensity for impulsivity or excitement seeking; a Machiavellian person is typically more watchful, strategic, and ungregarious. Machiavellianism might actually be a desirable factor under some organizational settings, such as during coalition-building (den Hartog & Belschak, 2012).

Levy et al. (2013) defined narcissism as a prevalent pattern of self-aggrandizement, need for admiration, and emotional coldness. A narcissistic individual constructs a seemingly robust self-image, but is often unusually sensitive to criticism of any kind and may act in overblown ways when confronted (Levy et al., 2013).

2.3 Life history theory

Developed in the 1960s, *life history theory* describes some core behavioral strategies used by an individual during their life and can be used as a tool to further elaborate on some prominent features of the dark triad personality. As stated by Hill (1993) "the [life history] theory is useful in explaining variations in age-specific human fertility and mortality patterns . . . this same theory can also be used to explain why people often ignore the long-term consequences of behaviors that produce short-term gain".

According to Jonason et al. (2010), life history theory is derived from general evolutionary theory and is used in numerous fields, including biology and psychology, describing the variance in resource-allocation an individual invests into both survival and mating/parenting. Although originally used for species-level differences, life history theory has been applied in the context of humans with some success (MacArthur and Wilson 1967; Wilson 1975; cited in Jonason, Koenig, & Tost 2010).

As defined within life history theory, most human beings today exhibit what is known as a *slow life strategy*. This involves investing time and effort in long-term goals, such as education and parenting. Differences between individuals' early socio-economical factors may contribute to a different life strategy which places less emphasis on long-term goals (Rushton 1985; according to Jonason, Koenig, & Tost 2010).

An individual with signs of the dark triad personality (i.e., frequent displays of narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism) often indicates a *fast life strategy* which prioritizes immediate rewards over slower progression towards one's life goals (Jonason et al., 2012). As stated by Rushton (1985), challenging childhood conditions tend to produce individuals who embrace a fast life strategy later in life. According to Csathó & Birkás (2018, p. 3):

Environmental conditions during childhood unequivocally form information processing, thus circumstantial factors in early-life shape how the individual reacts to unpredictability and harshness in later-life stages.

Self-centered personality features, some of which can be described using the dark triad, can represent the proximate level of fast life strategies which in themselves are a form of adaptation facilitating an individual's survival in a hard, unpredictable environment. The dark triad is therefore often connected to a fast life strategy as the former can be viewed as a cluster of personality indicators for the latter (Csathó & Birkás, 2018).

Finnish degenerate streamers exist simultaneously as individuals and performers of popular culture. As *individuals* they do not live in a cultural vacuum and seem to greatly enjoy the many varieties of popular entertainment including movies, music, and video games. As *performers* of popular culture, we can examine degenerate streamers as characters living a fast-life strategy. Numerous highly successful cinematic franchises, including Star Wars and James Bond, have prominent antihero-characters who embody the fast-life strategy to its fullest extent; many prominent fictional characters act out of self-interest with little emphasis on communal values. Their adventures now span decades and show no signs of stopping. These franchises are likely to have a degree of influence on several generations of consumers, including Finnish degenerate streamers. Media depictions of antisocial behavioral patterns may constitute a type of normalization.

According to Jonason et al. (2012, p. 193) the fast life strategy is portrayed by many popular fictional antiheroes, including Batman:

Antiheroes are characterized by a relatively fast life strategy. Bruce Wayne became Batman in response to witnessing his parents being mugged and killed in an alley . . . As would be predicted by life history theory, Batman is aggressive in his dealings with criminals . . . , antisocial in his interactions with others, and feels that he is special and entitled.

Batman is not the only example of a pop-culture character who is both destructive in many of his actions and whose origin story consists of traumatizing elements. Many popular fictional characters blur the line between anti-hero and antagonist altogether. Joker, a central criminal mastermind in the Batman universe, is portrayed as having a thoroughly disturbing childhood; as an adult he is capable of killing without remorse. Norman Bates from the “Psycho” franchise experienced a traumatizing early life under the aegis of his overbearing mother resulting in his bizarre adult existence as a violent, reclusive motel-owner (Thomas, 1997). All of this is in line with what we know about how some anti-social behavioral patterns emerge in real-life. Many characters in popular culture therefore contribute to the act of pop-culture emulating sociology.

Interestingly, popular music has recently experienced a shift from communal to first person -centered themes, possibly fueling narcissistic traits among its listeners; song lyrics describing antisocial behavioral patterns have become more prevalent between 1987 and 2007 (Dewall et al., 2011).

2.4 On societal norms and anomie

In sociology *anomie*, as described by Émile Durkheim, refers to a lack of social or ethical standards in an individual or group; living in normlessness is a symptom of anomie (Durkheim, 2006). This term is not to be confused with anarchy, which conveys the absence of the roles of laws and rulers. In Durkheim's thinking anomie was partially attributed to the rapid industrialization of the late 19th century and the ensuing division of labor (Durkheim, 2014). A division of labor, which is still very much

in effect, correlates with the increasing complexity of society and the new types of work it offers. Finnish degenerate streams seem to represent the lower rungs of society when it comes to employment, education, and other economic markers. Their activities suggest their in-group mostly shares values like escapism; they are usually welfare-dependent and un-specialized when it comes to potential labor tasks. Individualism and hedonism quickly become a high priority for some as society's social controls weaken in their effect (Durkheim, 2006). It can be therefore argued that a mindset of anomie offers a fertile ground for anti-social activities such as degenerate streaming.

Anomie is also said to take root when conflicting ideologies collide within society (Knutson, 1972). To a degenerate streamer, who is often unemployed, more productive members of society may represent "the other". In turn, the average Finn might come across a degenerate streamer and classify them as someone with an alien set of values. There seems to be very little intent to better society for the five individuals I researched. The degenerate streamers featured in this thesis are highly individualistic. They do not adhere to any specific daily schedule and seem to have given up on being employed for now, regardless of their age. Not fitting in society's expectations is a typical cause for feelings of alienation or, indeed, anomie.

Durkheim's widely adopted theory of anomie has been criticized as too narrow an approach when describing social exclusion. In *alienation theory* normlessness represents only one of a total of five dimensions, the others being powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, and self-estrangement; it can be argued the alienation theory model gives more accurate results when discussing anti-social behavioral patterns (Smith et al., 2008).

In the context of degenerate streaming Durkheim's concept of anomie is a valid tool when discussing the root-causes of these activities. Although more expansive, alienation theory is most often used when dealing with matters of criminology. The relationship with society and the degenerate streamer is complicated. This group clearly has a conflict with society and its norms. However, in part the Finnish welfare-

state enables their behavior. A clash of values seems to be in progress during degenerate streaming; this may be a fundamental aspect of the sub-culture.

An anti-hero by definition only follows society's norms if it benefits him or her. Degenerate streamers seem to fit this definition to a great extent. They tend to put effort only into absolutely mandatory societal duties, such as the Finnish military service in the case of the male streamers. Four out of the five individuals included in my research had a criminal record for vandalism, assault, or drug-related crimes, with some of them obtained during the course of degenerate streaming. A Dark Triad personality is a strong correlate with violent delinquency (Wright et al., 2017).

The Internet can be seen as a massive surveillance and control tool (Lyon, 1998). The streamers have shown themselves to be aware of how leaking sensitive data online can be harmful. However, they seem mostly indifferent about their personal details, apart from discussions of their criminal activities in the case of those streamers with such experiences.

3. Data and methods

The data-set for this study consists solely of video material. I collected a total of 24 hours of degenerate live streaming, focusing on five individual degenerate streamers; I allocated approximately five hours of video per streamer for analysis. This material was gathered during October 2019 and June 2020 from videos presented on YouTube. Many Finnish degenerate streams are a one-time event, unless captured by a viewer, as the streamers themselves often do not store their video material online for later review. I saved roughly twelve hours of the video material myself (as performed by degenerate streamers) using screen-capture software for the purposes of this study.

The five subjects were chosen based on the following criteria:

- The subject had to be at least eighteen years of age on October 1st 2019 to conform to ethical considerations
- They had to have a history of at least one year of degenerate streaming (defined as video-streamed reckless behavior and/or substance abuse) prior to the period of data gathering
- They had to stream for a minimum of five hours individually during the data gathering period

3.1 Ethical considerations

Researching Finnish degenerate streamers does present numerous ethical challenges due to the subjects' prevalent issues with mental health and addiction. Although the members of the group being researched openly display their faces (and in rare cases, their full names), the fact that most of them are visibly intoxicated a lot of the time makes their ability to consent somewhat questionable. However, all subjects in this research project are already willingly putting themselves into public forums. In addition, their online activities do include streaming in a sober and thus ethically more sound state from the viewpoint of giving consent.

According to Farrimond (2012), acting unfavorably towards one's research subjects can have unforeseen negative consequences; ethics in a research context should hold a higher standard than any organizational or institutional requirements. Finnish national board on research integrity TENK has published national guidelines on the ethical principles of research in the humanities since 2009. I was aware of these guidelines, which state that “the researcher respects the dignity and autonomy of human research participants. The rights laid down in the Finnish Constitution . . . are held by everybody” (Kohonen et al., 2019, p. 8). One of my primary considerations when researching Finnish degenerate streaming was to remain as courteous towards the research subjects as possible. My personal interaction with them was kept to a minimum throughout the research process, only to the extent of communicating if approached first. I did not direct the proceedings in any way, unlike many members of the audience in a degenerate stream who often do.

When it comes to the issue of compensation, many marginalized groups are known to take part in research for free for altruistic reasons (Souleymanov et al., 2016). Financial compensation was not provided because my thesis did not take a person's time or reveal any sensitive personal information as it might pertain to precise geographical location or other factors.

3.2 The public personas of the five degenerate streamers

I will now present the age and other life circumstances of the five subjects of this thesis as they pertained during my data gathering period from October 2019 to June 2020. All of their names and some relevant details have been changed in order to protect their identities. Each of these streamers had a criminal record by the time of this study consisting of either drug-related crimes or other types of criminality.

1. *Jaana*, 42, lives in the Kainuu region of Finland. She has appeared often as a guest on several degenerate streams. Jaana is employed part-time in the food preparation industry. She has several adult children, although she is protective of their personal details. Jaana has currently no steady life partner. She rarely

streams on her own, instead appearing as a guest on streams set up by other degenerate streamers.

2. *Helena*, 29, lives in the Kanta-Häme region of Finland. She is a prolific streamer often making several live shows a week. Helena has used many varieties of drugs in her streams. On occasion she does “dares” for money, which include drinking a full container of hard alcohol and/or taking handfuls of prescribed medication. Helena has often talked about her mental health issues during her streams. She has revealed having been classified as an individual who is unable to work. Helena is in a relationship with a male of similar age and interests who is not directly included in this study. The couple often entertain their friends at home on their live streams as well. They sometimes engage in mutual verbal or physical abuse on-screen.

3. *Esko*, 33, lives in the North Ostrobothnia region of Finland. He has been unemployed for several years. On occasion he secures part-time unskilled jobs for a few weeks or months. Esko is a user of several varieties of drugs, including tranquilizers and those of the intravenous type. He does not have children or a steady life partner. Esko usually streams himself wandering the streets of his home town and interacting with random bystanders, occasionally shutting off his camera when taking drugs. Out of the five degenerate streamers in this study, Esko is the least averse to engaging in physical altercations when provoked.

4. *Iiro*, 23, lives in the Pirkanmaa region of Finland. He has been streaming since 2015 and his live streams often consist of intoxicated and disorderly behavior in public. He has shared his psychiatric diagnoses with his audience numerous times. Due to the nature of his streams, Iiro has been through the Finnish legal system with fines and other penalties. Towards the summer of 2020 he became increasingly reluctant to perform in public, opting to live stream from his home instead. He continued his disruptive behavior in the form of prank phone calls, often to Finnish authorities. Iiro is not in a relationship.

5. *Jiri*, 31, lives in North Karelia in Finland. He has been streaming as early as 2007. Jiri was arrested dozens of times in his twenties for disorderly behavior. He has since taken to streaming in private, usually from his home, which consists of him drinking alcohol, taking drugs, and playing video games. Jiri has mentioned feeling hopeless and depressed numerous times during his live streams. However, he is very keen to visit other Finnish degenerate streamers and viewers even across vast distances. Jiri is not in a relationship.

3.3 Analysis of data

Quantifying the popularity of individual Finnish degenerate streamers is somewhat challenging. Many of these streamers do not store their broadcasts online for later viewing. On occasion their channels are banned and content deleted from YouTube due to policy violations. Due to these reasons channel subscriber counts in this context are a rather inadequate metric as degenerate streamers often do not have permanent official channels. To gauge the overall popularity of Finnish degenerate streaming I added the viewership numbers of both a streamer's available original output as well as those from viewer-made highlight-compilations, which are a popular type of video on YouTube since the beginning of this streaming phenomenon. Using this method, a single well-known Finnish degenerate streamer generates a total of between 25 000 and 100 000 views per annum on YouTube. As for the audience on individual live streams the number of concurrent viewers can reach upwards of 400, depending on the level of on-screen activity. Uneventful degenerate streams tend to draw around 30 viewers at best. I will not present any more specific numbers about the five subjects of this study in order to further protect their privacy.

In the analysis of the data-set I focused on the amount of discussion and portrayal of the relevant themes I observed, and not solely by a quantitative occurrence (e.g. specific spoken words). I started my analysis by thematically coding the materials, which in this case consists of video footage of Finnish degenerate streaming. The typologies presented later in this thesis are based on the most relevant themes and life-story elements found among the subjects of this research, in other words the five

Finnish degenerate streamers, and to a lesser extent some of the most frequent visitors in these streams.

I looked for themes which correlate best with the main traits of the dark triad personality as they have been identified crucial to the concept of the anti-hero by Jonason and Koenig. To reiterate, an antihero derives from a pool of specific behavioral patterns, some of which are antisocial in nature. According to Jonason and Koenig (2010), a dark triad personality consists of narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism; these traits often translate to excessive risk-taking, prioritizing short-term gratification, and openness to spontaneous intimate relations. In addition, a person with strong indicators of the dark triad personality is more likely to engage in criminal or unethical behavior (Wright et al., 2017). This type of behavior is not rare in the case of Finnish degenerate streaming.

Typology refers to the analysis and classification of research subjects/concepts into types or categories. It is an analytical process which aims to condense the data so that the analysis reflects key aspects of the collected material; typification is the clarification of characteristics that emerge from the data (Eskola & Suoranta, 2008).

According to Eskola & Suoranta (2008), a typological approach must meet certain criteria: first, the different types must emphasize the features and characteristics typical of a specific phenomenon; second, the features and characteristics of one type must distinguish it from another type. A typology should cover all members in the sample data (Eskola & Suoranta, 2008).

Bailey has stated that implementing purely empirical classifications is sometimes complicated as they largely correlate with both the sample size and the dimensions being used (1994). The classification process may have up to three levels of analysis, namely the conceptual, the empirical, and the combined conceptual/empirical levels (Bailey, 1994). According to Bailey the last of these levels consists of creating a conceptual classification into which the studied research variables are then categorized.

A qualitative classification can usually be created without a statistical analysis; a data-set of mostly verbal and conceptual content is generally a good fit for this variety of typology (Bailey, 1994). Therefore the approach of qualitative classification will be used for the typology in this thesis. More specifically, that is to be thematic analysis, facilitated by thematic coding. With this method, the researcher is to note patterns in the data and divide it up for greater clarity; these patterns are then assigned codes (Marks & Yardley, 2004).

I began the process of the data-analysis by downloading or capturing approximately five hours of video-streaming per each of the research subjects. This consisted of several video-files with the cutoff for duration being one hour per stream. These files were stored locally on a hard disk in case they were deleted from the internet.

A majority of degenerate video streams consist of the streamers responding to chat messages from the viewing public in real time. I paid close attention how a streamer responded to questions and comments about their streaming activities and life-themes presented by their audience. Three classifications for the prevalence of a theme within the data-set were created: high, moderate, and low. These classifications are only partially based on the frequency of their appearance during a video-stream. Although I initially planned to base my thematic categorization solely on counting, I later found it more fruitful to put less emphasis on this approach. According to Miles and Huberman (2014), a researcher can determine codes for pieces of data by careful reflection on their core content or meaning, giving him or her an intimate and interpretative familiarity with the material; counting may also overlook a relevant and interesting minority report that occurs only once in a data-set.

In addition to counting keywords, a qualitative method of gauging the intensity each research subject displayed when discussing a topic was used. The metrics included the duration of discussion on a topic per individual, emotional intensity (including the degree of refusal to discuss topics) as well as the vocabulary utilized to describe the

themes. For example, swearing as inspired by a topic sometimes signifies a more intense emotional reaction.

4. Results

The goal of this study was to research the phenomenon of Finnish degenerate streaming and whether the concepts of the antihero and the dark triad personality can be applied to it. A key component to this process was to discover the most common themes in this variety of streaming and investigate if they resonate with those found in the dark triad personality.

4.1 Main themes of degenerate streaming

I discovered four main core themes in a typical Finnish degenerate stream; these are presented in Table 2 which also contains some of their most frequently encountered sub-themes.

Theme	Mental well-being	Criminal activities	Sexual activities	Substance abuse
Sub-themes/ keywords	Mental health medical history of self or others, descriptions of mental illness symptoms, self-harm, life skills, suicidal ideation	Descriptions of past crimes committed, threats received or given, hearsay on crimes committed by others, prison stories, criminal schemes	Interpersonal or solitary sexual acts, comments on others' promiscuous behavior or state of celibacy, reproductive health	Drug use and withdrawal symptoms, drug overdose histories, sobriety and relapse

Table 2. The four identified core themes in degenerate streaming with their associated sub-themes based on coding.

Table 3 presents an overview of the topic frequencies distributed between the five streamers whose output I analyzed; it is not intended to portray the results of the research other than at a glance. The classifications of low, moderate, and high include all factors presented earlier, including the duration a streamer spent conversing about a topic and the perceived related emotional charge.

Streamer	Mental well-being	Criminal activities	Sexual activities	Substance abuse
Jaana	High	-	Low	Low
Helena	Low	High	High	High
Esko	Moderate	Low	Moderate	High
Iiro	High	Moderate	Low	High
Jiri	Moderate	Low	Low	High

Table 3. The five degenerate streamers with the emphasis of their output in the four identified core themes based on coding.

The main four themes in degenerate streaming (i.e. mental well-being, criminality, sexual activity, and substance abuse) will be explored next using specific incidents from the data-set. I have personally translated the dialogue from Finnish, in part to guard the privacy of the individuals featured.

1. The following transcription is based on a video taken in Helena's apartment on June 1st 2020, late at night. Both Helena and her boyfriend are visibly intoxicated. The camera is fixed on the table, facing them both. The scene demonstrates criminality in the form of domestic violence.

Boyfriend Take your fucking food, you fucking cow, and get the hell out.

Helena kicks her boyfriend on the ribs, who then proceeds to throw her mobile phone across the kitchen. It lands in a cat's water dish.

Helena [Slaps boyfriend on the head] Fuck! You ruined my phone. Good for you.

Boyfriend Oh dear..

Helena [Punches boyfriend hard on the temple] Great. You go fuck yourself.

Boyfriend [Stands up] Fucking punch me! Fucking punch me more.

Helena You ruined my phone.

Boyfriend [Sits down] Oh dear..
 Helena I'll ruin yours.
 Boyfriend Go ahead [Offers phone, stands up provocatively]

The situation escalates into full-blown physical altercation soon after, lasting approximately fifteen minutes in total. Helena is heard locking herself in the toilet and crying out of the camera's view. Loud banging noises are heard next as her boyfriend apparently smashes through the door.

2. May 7th 2020. Esko is heavily intoxicated while filming groups of people socializing outdoors close to the Bothnian Bay coastal area. He starts filming two people, individuals A and B, who appear to be underaged. They tell Esko repeatedly to leave them alone. Esko refuses and continues to film the individuals in silence for more than a minute. The scene demonstrates criminality in the form of threats of violence.

Individual B You'll be in the river soon.
 Esko You'll be the one in the river.
 Individual A Do you have something to say?
 Individual B [Grabs Esko's phone] Fuck you for filming.
 Esko I'm asking you very lovingly to give that back.
 Individual A [Brandishes a small pocket knife] Why the fuck are you standing there?
 Do you have a problem?
 Esko No, this is content.
 Individual A Fuck your content.. go film other people!
 Esko [Laughs belligerently]
 Individual A How about.. death. Nothing is stopping me. I don't care.

After a few minutes of verbal abuse and threats of violence mostly from the two individuals Esko retreats from all parties back to his regular group of friends.

3. May 25th 2020. Jiri is visiting his friends. He has been on drugs for several days in a row and is smoking a cigarette on a balcony. Jiri is then seen having great difficulty re-

entering the apartment apparently due to heavy intoxication or drug withdrawal symptoms. These symptoms seem to consist of severe muscle tremor and loss of balance. As Jiri stumbles around, one of his friends starts to laugh; a third individual is seen behind him, having apparently collapsed earlier. Buckets apparently intended for vomiting into are also visible on the apartment floor. The scene demonstrates the theme of mental well-being.

4. August 2019. The scene demonstrates the theme of substance abuse. Iiro is at a park late at night by himself. He approaches three young women who are having a picnic on the grass. Iiro repeatedly declares being extremely intoxicated and requests the women call him a taxi home. One of them says she will do that if Iiro stops filming them. Several disruptive and offensive text-to-speech messages are sent in by the viewers and played back on Iiro's portable speaker device. Eventually the group disperses with one of the women trying to assist Iiro in getting a taxi home for himself.

Text-to-speech (TTS) messages in the context of degenerate streaming are sent in by viewers in exchange for small sums of money. These messages are frequently used to cause confusion in onlookers and for comedic effect. They are read out loud by a speech synthesizer application in a smartphone and sometimes played back from a separate loud-speaker carried by some streamers for extra volume.

5. October 4th 2019. Iiro is at Alko, the Finnish national monopoly retailer of alcoholic beverages, filming himself with his phone-camera. A salesperson confronts him on suspicion of re-selling alcohol to minors. Iiro remains adamant of his innocence. After nearly four minutes of debating the salesperson retreats to her work area. Iiro follows her, having put two bottles of hard liquor in his shopping trolley.

Iiro God damn it, sell me some. You're gonna sell some right now.

Salesperson No..

Iiro You're gonna sell some [puts both bottles through the product counter device].

Salesperson No.

Iiro Now all I need to do is swipe my card.

Salesperson I've tried explaining to you.

liro You know that guy [the person liro is suspected of re-selling alcohol to] is older than me. God damn it. Sell me some.

Salesperson [Calls for security] This is a preventative measure.

liro Let's do this again [Tries to put the bottles through the device]

Salesperson [Grabs and hides the bottles behind the counter] We can't let this slide.

liro How about I give you cash under the counter, tax-free?

The two parties continue to argue for a number of minutes until a security guard calls the salesperson back. liro then finally leaves the store premises.

6. July 25th 2020. The scene demonstrates the theme of mental well-being. Jiri is streaming from home alone. He is seen nodding off at his computer and slipping in and out of unconsciousness due to heavy continuing drug use spread over several days. Jiri is periodically startled awake, apparently reacting to hallucinations with whom he has brief, animated conversations. He tells his audience the “shadow people” are with him again; they sometimes surface during Jiri's more severe withdrawal episodes. The audience is told these figures are making noises around the apartment and annoying Jiri on purpose. He explains the shadow people don't like sunlight and considers opening all of the curtains in his apartment. Jiri continues to have arguments with them throughout the video-stream, until finally falling fully asleep.

7. May 17th 2020. Helena is seen at home with a male guest. Both appear intoxicated. Members of the chat ask repeatedly if the two have plans to get intimate that night. The guest then goes jokingly into graphic detail about his chronic sexual dysfunction, citing the use of amphetamines as the primary source of his issues. Helena finds this exchange humorous and agrees there will not be any intimacy between her and her guest anytime in the near future.

4.2 Typologies of degenerate streamers

I will now present typologies for the three of the most common streamer types I identified during my data-analysis to clarify some of the repeating characteristics that

arise from the information. These typologies are fictional characters who share some of the characteristics of actual Finnish degenerate streamers; they were created to demonstrate how the concept of the antihero and its associable features of the dark triad -personality might manifest in the public personas of the streamers of this variety. For these typologies I assigned each of them both a first name and a title best reflecting their respective characteristics and behavioral patterns. However, the names and identities given to them are not related to the five streamers presented earlier in this thesis. In addition, each streamer description is followed by a fictional chat-conversation demonstrating the main features of that particular type.

4.2.1 Make, the despondent drifter

Make, 31, is a single man from the city of Tampere, Finland. He has been unemployed for six years and lives in a council-provided single-room apartment in Hervanta, a rather poor region of the city. He has numerous addictions, mostly to alcohol and tranquilizer medication, which he abuses on a nearly daily basis. Make leads a mostly solitary life with few physical social interactions. He has stated to have been diagnosed with moderate depression in his late teens. Although prescribed medication for it, he has not taken a dose in years. Make considers himself apolitical and non-religious.

Make is in generally poor health, having issues with dental hygiene and diabetes. He does not have any interest in physical activities. Make broadcasts video-streams roughly every other day; these tend to consist of him consuming drugs, drinking and, on occasion, playing video games. He usually does not have any guests present while streaming. Sometimes he streams himself self-harming at home or yelling at passers-by downtown. Make's viewers sometimes send him donations of between one and twenty euros to fund his lifestyle. Although he claims these donations are used for living expenses, they are almost always used on intoxicants. He occasionally stages a live-streamed emotional fit to extract more resources from his potential donators, citing a severe drug-withdrawal or a personal loss as reasons for the need for extra donations. Make has confessed doing this to his viewership from time to time.

Having had a troubled childhood with parental neglect, Make has stated he is distrustful of people in general. He was frequently bullied in middle-school and became noticeably introverted early in life. At age eighteen Make did his best to study for a vocational degree in vehicle mechanics, but quit long before graduation due to continuing experiences of social exclusion and emotional abuse. At age nineteen he was discharged from the mandatory Finnish military service, after just four days on the premises, due to having illegal drugs on his person.

Make has been sexually inactive for years, having had just one short relationship of two months in his early twenties. He has stated that he will make sure he never has a family of his own and prefers isolation instead. Make has also said he plans to end his life before turning forty, “with cirrhosis of liver or by other means; I just don't care to live much longer”.

This typology primarily demonstrates the trait of narcissism as used in the context of the Dark triad -personality. Make rarely takes responsibility for his predicament, which consists of numerous long-running addictions and financial issues. He feels somewhat entitled to attention and viewer donations. On occasion Make is willing to fabricate stories to exploit the more naive members of his audience. For example, he may claim he has no money or food at his disposal although he has both; the veracity of his claims is usually rather difficult to corroborate.

The following is a fictional conversation during a degenerate stream between Make and his viewing audience, who participate with typed chat-messages. A cheerful pop-song is playing through Make's computer's speakers, clearly audible in the background. While the audience's input consists of typed messages, Make himself is using his voice for communication. He remains slumped in his chair throughout the exchange.

Chat Did you get some booze?

Make Yeah I got myself some of this expensive stuff [shows a half-full bottle of vodka]

Chat Chug the rest!

Make This is making me tired. I should slow down.

Chat You just need more booze.

Chat Come on guys, he just had some weed. He'll fall asleep if he drinks more.

Make Let me find a better tune [begins looking for a different song to play in the background]

Chat Get a job, loser.

Chat Chug! Chug! Chug!

Make I missed my dentist's appointment today. Damn this hurts [rubs his cheek]

Chat Booze will numb the pain.

Make I'll start seeing things if I chug this now.

Chat I'll give you ten euros if you do.

Make For twenty I'll do it.

Chat Twenty euros for content. Not bad!

Chat It's not content if he falls asleep, idiot.

Make Last time I checked my bank account I had less than one euro.

Chat We'll make you rich again.

Chat Go drink your booze outdoors.

Make I'm not going outdoors again anytime soon. People have started to recognize me on the street.

Chat Go drink outside and interview people.

Make I also need a donation to cover the horrible hangover tomorrow or I might do something irreversible. And there's no food in my fridge!

Chat Get yourself some classy woman. She'll bring some candy with her.

Make I don't need a woman.

Chat He's already dating that single mom, Minna.

Chat Online dating isn't really dating.

Chat Will you smoke more weed?

Make No I think I had enough of that. I started seeing things.

Chat The shadow people are at it again.

Chat Who's that behind you?

Make There's just the couch behind me..

Chat On the couch. There's someone. Look!

Make There's nobody there [turns to look at his couch]

Chat You're a fat piece of shit.

Make Tell me something I don't know.

Chat Be nice or he'll switch off the stream. No one else is on.

Make Yeah be nice. Come on, donate the twenty bucks.

Chat I just did.

Make You did? [opens his online bank account] Wow, you really did.

Chat Now do some drinking.

Chat He's got enough cash to drink tomorrow, too.

Make Alright, but this won't be easy [drinks the rest of the vodka bottle on camera] Damn that's foul! I hate this stuff..

Chat Content incoming!

Chat He'll just fall asleep. You'll see. It's the weed already in his system.

Make My friend told me he got some pills for the both of us. I might try those tomorrow.

Chat Mix the pills with booze.

Make I'm not doing that again. Last time I passed out and woke up covered in my own vomit.

Chat Hey Make. How's the wife and kids? Did you get promoted recently?

Make Yeah I'm a professional substance abuser and I got promoted [closes eyes].

Chat Look he's getting a little tipsy.

Chat Who told him to finish that bottle? Idiot.

Chat Hey Make, do you have any nude pictures of Minna you could share?

Chat Great, he's out.. Sweet dreams.

Chat Yeah thank you so much whoever made the donation. Fucking idiot.

Make [startles awake] Who are you?

Chat He's alive!

Make I told you not to do it. I told you to stop making a racket. Go away already..

Chat He's talking to the shadow people.

Make Get out. Get out of my house!

Chat Start screaming and banging on the walls.

Chat Wanna get him thrown out of his apartment? lol ["lol" is an acronym for "laughing out loud"]

Make I'll make you leave then. I'll open the blinds and let some sunlight in. That should do it.

Chat Yeah it's the shadow people alright.

Make Where am I? At home? The stream is still on.. I thought there were people in here.

Chat We're here, champ. We're always here for you.

4.2.2 Jykä, the charming villain

Jykä, 35, lives in single household in Joensuu, Finland. He has been unemployed ever since graduating from middle school. Most of his income consists of government benefits. He also frequently supplements his income from viewer donations and criminal activities. Jykä is a prolific, daily streamer with a large viewership on YouTube and other online video platforms. His streams often consist of heavy drug use and disorderly conduct in public.

At school Jykä's academic performance was below-par. He faced numerous accounts of disciplinary action from the school authorities, such as detention and even temporary expulsion. Jykä was a known bully as a teen. He was given an exemption from military duty from the Finnish army at age eighteen.

Jykä is known to be deceptive about his uses of monetary donations. He often fabricates troubling scenarios to his audience in order to receive money. Jykä has a reputation of never paying back loans. He has had brushes with the law throughout his adult life. He has been convicted of numerous robberies and assaults ever since his late teens. Jykä has even served short stints of a few months in prison.

His issues with poor oral health notwithstanding, Jykä is considered very attractive in traditional terms. He is romantically very experienced. He has had dozens of partners and short-term relationships ever since his teens. Jykä suspects he has fathered several children, but has never kept in touch with any of them or their mothers. His relationships tend to fail as soon as he is found out to be stealing drugs, medication, or money from women; this is his typical pattern of behavior in relationships. Jykä has expressed being frustrated about aging, as he can no longer find partners as easily as he used to. When asked about his life philosophy, he simply stated “to have a good time, all the time”.

This typology best demonstrates the traits of psychopathy and Machiavellianism in the context of Finnish degenerate streaming. Jykä is a controlling, overbearing individual who lives in the here and now. He is mostly concerned with short-term gratification without much regard for the well-being of himself or those around him. Jykä is superficially charming, quick to anger, and can usually manipulate others with ease. He is openly boastful of his criminal record and ability to con people. Compared to Make, Jykä is much more prone to engaging in physical violence in order to create content for viewer donations. The following is a fictional conversation during a degenerate stream between Jykä and Maija, his current romantic interest.

Maija	What's up? Are you high on benzos again? [the term benzo refers to benzodiazepines, a class of tranquilizer drugs]
Jykä	No I'm not.
Maija	You are too. I can tell.
Jykä	What are you on? Anti-depressants?
Maija	Yeah, I took my dose today.
Jykä	What's the point? They're not gonna get you high.
Maija	I take them because I need them.
Jykä	No you don't. You only need me.
Maija	Last time I stopped taking my meds I went crazy.
Jykä	Whatever. I only take meds that make me high.
Maija	Yeah I know

Jykä Got anything else on your mind? I'm about to go out with the boys soon.

Maija I think we should talk.

Jykä I don't like that tone.

Maija I saw you at the other girl's chat.

Jykä So?

Maija I thought you knew I don't like you doing that.

Jykä Look, bitch. Here's the deal. If you still want me over next weekend you'll shut up about this.

Maija Why are you like that?

Jykä If you don't start behaving I'm blocking you on my phone.

Maija I'm sorry..

Jykä Maybe you are going a little crazy. Keep taking your bullshit meds and relax, or we're done.

Maija Okay, hun. I'll see you next weekend.

Jykä Act nice and maybe I'll share some of my fun pills with you..

4.2.3 Minna, the matured confidante

Minna, 43, is a single mother of two children who are both in high school. Her family lives in Joensuu in a two-room council-provided apartment. Minna is employed as a full-time cook in a local secondary school. She visits Finnish degenerate streams quite often, but rarely broadcasts herself. Instead, Minna prefers to either voice call or text-chat with the streamers for interaction.

Minna grew up in a rather poor family. Both of her parents were somewhat abusive and she experienced social exclusion in school as well. As a teenager Minna's psychological issues were mostly ignored. Later as an adult, she was diagnosed with depression and is still on medication, which seems to work in her favor. Minna has talked about her earlier life in earnest; she shares many personal experiences with degenerate streamers. Prior to having children, Minna self-medicated with drugs and alcohol. She has also experienced a string of abusive relationships.

Instead of taking part in the usual activities of degenerate streaming like substance abuse, Minna has a more supportive role in the community. She volunteers constructive advice to many of the streamers and is known to donate food and other utilities on occasion. Minna has a personal policy of never donating money to any of the degenerate streamers she is in contact with. When describing her top priority in life, Minna states the following: "I want my children to have more support than I ever did growing up."

Minna displayed several prominent dark triad -traits in her youth including criminality, a low threshold for engaging in violence, and excessive risk-taking (i.e. psychopathic tendencies). However, these traits are not manifesting in her life as frequently as they used to. Psychopathic behavior tends to decrease significantly upon reaching middle-age for many individuals with the dark triad -personality (Makim & Shetty, 2018). Minna has gained a deep understanding of the dark triad from her personal experiences and now feels drawn towards individuals who are still engaging in these behaviors. The following is a fictional conversation during a degenerate stream between Minna and Make whom are communicating using their video cameras. Other people participate with typed chat-messages.

Minna	Just turn off the computer and get some sleep. You've had enough to drink tonight.
Make	I've got a few beers left.
Minna	Give them to a friend tomorrow.
Make	I have no friends.
Minna	Come on, you got a few right here..
Chatter	Ooh she wants you dude.
Make	What time is it? I can't even find my phone. I'm so useless
Minna	You're not. You just need something better to do with your life.
Make	What's the point? We're all gonna die one day.
Minna	Hold on. My kid is calling [switches computer audio off].
Chatter	Typical single mom.
Make	Fuck this. I'm so tired of this.

Minna [switches computer audio on] Sorry, my kid was having trouble.

Make Should we maybe get together or something?

Minna You wanna come over? It's a long trip.

Make I can probably make donates to cover that.

Minna I mean, sure, you're welcome. But I don't want to drink with you or anything. I just had a six-pack last Friday.

Make Yeah, yeah, we could just hang out.

Minna Have you been eating anything?

Make Not really. I managed to fry a pizza today. I forgot it in the oven for too long.

Minna How's your tooth?

Make It still hurts.

Minna I guess you missed your dentist's appointment I made you commit to.

Make Yeah, well I had a few guys come over..

Minna Maybe you do need a change of scenery for a while.

Make I can't think about that right now.

Minna Take something for the pain.

Make I lost the bottle of pills.

Minna I'd share some ibuprofen but we live 400 kilometers apart..

Make I know you would.

Minna So are we still on for the trip? I hope to hang out with you soon.

Chatter She wants you bro.

Make I doubt that.

Minna Look, I consider you a good friend.

Make Yeah, yeah, I know. I appreciate that.

Chat Do you two exchange nudes?

Make Fuck these trolls.

Minna Just ignore the chat..

Make I never cared about them in the first place.

Table 4 describes the observed distribution of the four core themes as it pertains to the three typologies above.

Character	Mental well-being	Criminal activities	Sexual activities	Substance abuse
Make	Moderate	Low	Low	High
Jykä	Low	High	High	High
Minna	High	-	Moderate	Low

Table 4. The three streamer-types/typologies with the frequencies of their output in the four identified core themes.

4.3 Streamer-audience interactions

A word voiced often by degenerate streamers and their audience is *content* (usually stylized as *kontent*). In the context of degenerate streaming content refers to portrayals of scenes with dramatic events, such as verbal or physical altercations, or a streamer's attempts at courting a romantic partner. Content is a concept used in other types of streams as well, such as video gaming streams, although to a lesser extent. Content is what often drives up the viewership numbers and makes degenerate streaming channels more popular. It seems the typical audience-member in a degenerate stream expects dramatic events, such as physical fights or other belligerent acts. An audience member is primarily present to provide financial donations to the streamers. The streamer, being the potential provider of content, can and does exert some control over their audiences by bluffing or lying about their intentions. Although harmful to their reputation, this activity occurs somewhat frequently among Finnish degenerate streamers. For example, some streamers may gain more donations by exaggerating their drug-related withdrawal symptoms in order to extract resources to fund their addictions. On-screen stealing also occurs although rather infrequently.

Belligerent acts for the sake of this variety of content can come with a serious cost, such as criminal charges or physical injuries. The fact that, by definition, degenerate streamers are under the influence of intoxicants during their broadcasts makes them especially prone to resorting to antisocial outbursts. Many drugs are known to greatly

diminish impulse-control. The audience is often egging the streamers on to get into fights or to engage in other types of public disorderly conduct. One of the most popular ways of manipulating the streamers towards conflict is to lure them into meetings with individuals with whom they are known to hold grudges with. This often results in more or less violent exchanges, broadcast live on the screens of those who instigated this.

Schadenfraude is a concept referring to deriving pleasure from someone else's misfortunes. One of the most typical settings for this phenomenon is when an in-group observes out-group misfortune (Smith et al., 2009). In the case of degenerate streaming, many watchers frequently express an obvious sentiment of *schadenfraude*. This includes sarcastic comments and attempts at humiliating the streamers. Efforts are made to craft a division between the "honest and hard-working" group represented by some of the viewers, and the streamers who represent a "net loss" for society. Some viewers occasionally berate the streamers for being unemployed or having mental health problems; they reinforce the discourse that the degenerate streamers represent the undesirable, sometimes incorrigible other.

Any potential preconceptions and biases present in the physical world seem to exist in the virtual life to a greater degree than researchers initially expected; class and other social variables originating in non-virtual reality are also found in virtual communities (Higgins et al., 1999). The online community around Finnish degenerate streamers seems to consist of mostly critical viewers, as gauged by real-time chat messages and related YouTube comment section contents. A sense of passing judgment on the streamers on socioeconomic bases is present in large swathes of this material.

Degenerate streamers rarely receive genuine appreciation for their efforts. When that does occur they seem to be candidly moved by it. Tokens of viewer gratitude include creating fan-art depicting notable streaming moments or giving well-intended words of encouragement; this seems to be the rarest type of communication offered by the viewership. Some see a degenerate streamer as a kind of folk hero very much worth celebrating. For example, Esko has successfully sold numerous drawings he himself

created to some of the more appreciative viewers. Even small-scale efforts at merchandising have been made by some degenerate streamers. These include leveraging on-demand printing services for a streamer's particular brand in order to provide viewers with t-shirts and other apparel.

4.4 Financial activity in Finnish degenerate streaming

Single viewer donations to degenerate streamers typically range between two and twenty euros. These donations usually correlate with the amount of on-screen anti-social activity and usually require a streamer is interacting with unpredictable members of the public, in settings such as nightclubs and bars. On occasion, donations are also made when conflict is being initiated between two or more degenerate streamers recording live video from someone's home. These conflicts are often rooted in accusations of theft or those of spreading sensitive personal information online. A solitary streamer staying at the computer doesn't generate much in the way of donation revenue.

Degenerate streamers have been known to earn hundreds of euros during a month from viewer donations, although these occurrences are not common. Donation money usually stays well under a hundred euros per month for the average Finnish degenerate streamer, many of whom sometimes express concern over these donations exceeding specific limits set by KELA (i.e. The Social Insurance Institution of Finland). A single Finnish citizen on welfare may deposit up to 50 euros to their bank account each month without being financially penalized; the limit is 100 euros for couples who cohabitate (KELA, 2021). Some viewers of Finnish degenerate streams voice threats of informing specific government officials about a streamers' extra income. This has become somewhat of a staple of online bullying within the community and seems to understandably trigger many of the streamers. Donations are occasionally routed to the bank accounts of a streamer's friends or family members who are not dependent on government welfare and thus have no limitations for their monthly earnings. On rare occasions viewer donations are also presented to the

streamers during live meetings in a physical form including as cash, groceries, or intoxicants.

Degenerate streamers sometimes set distinct donation goals for their video streams. Such goals are displayed during these streams in the form of a bar which fills up as donations are made, in order to help visualize the progress. These goals range from requests for more intoxicants to relatively hefty travel expenses (e.g. “a case of beer”, “trip to Rovaniemi”). The viewing audience generally responds fairly well to this approach and is willing to donate in earnest while a donation goal is in effect.

The donation payment system used by many online video producers, including degenerate streamers, is typically provided by Streamlabs-software, which is a free solution for processing online payments. A delay of up to one week is to be expected for bank transfers of donation money using this method.

5. Discussion

In this study degenerate streaming is framed within the context of the anti-hero, which consists of elements found in the dark triad personality, namely narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. Without a doubt, Finnish degenerate streamers display callousness and other anti-social tendencies towards each other and many other peer-groups. Some of them are known to openly steal, lie, get violent, and manipulate in order to satisfy their personal and financial needs; this is apparent in many of them having criminal records.

A typical Finnish degenerate streamer therefore displays many of the characteristics described in the dark triad personality. Opportunism and strategic calculation provide counterpoints to their learned everyday helplessness. High levels of irresponsibility, risk-taking, and attention-seeking are inherent to Finnish degenerate streaming as they openly embody fast life strategies as described by the life history theory. Out of the five individuals selected for this thesis, four seemed to implement these life strategies; this is evident in their frequent substance abuse, lack of educational pursuits, disinterest in parenting, and tendency to solve conflict through emotional or physical violence. The financial aspect of degenerate streaming is also obvious; the dramatic potency of content usually correlates with the amount of viewer donations.

This study shows ample evidence that Finnish degenerate streamers do in fact embody the concept of the antihero. They have harnessed today's internet technologies in an attempt to rectify some of their financial and social issues; this takes place regardless of how the rest of society feels about it at nearly any cost to the well-being or reputation of the streamers. On a larger scale the emergence of degenerate streamers can be viewed as sociological indicator of well-being and the welfare-state. While most of the socially alienated suffer in graceful silence, a degenerate streamer is a decidedly public actor. This can be seen as a form of misguided, but necessary heroism; too many fail to voice their pain.

The public personas of Finnish degenerate streamers are brash and unashamed of their predicament. Degenerate streaming is fueled by low economical status, addiction issues, and largely untreated psychological trauma. The individuals engaging in this activity are almost without exception those most neglected by their immediate peers and to an extent the Finnish society at large. The usual means of intervention offered by society are ineffective in most cases of degenerate streamers (e.g. governmental employment services).

The telefetish (i.e. the idealized on-screen self) of the Finnish degenerate streamer seems to consist mostly of internal values; appearance and other external factors play a very small part. A degenerate streamer is a survivor and a hoodie-clad warrior, he or she is an individual who tackles (admittedly frequent) conflict with ease. They are expert networkers with like-minded individuals and quick to adapt to new sets of circumstances. A degenerate streamer may not have a steady income, a significant other, or a fixed abode. What they have instead is the ability to be cunning and even ambitious in their social circle; at best they orchestrate events to draw in hundreds of euros in a week.

5.1 The dark triad in degenerate streaming

By engaging in degenerate streaming a person forfeits many of the qualities society expects, such as civility and agreeability in social situations. Potential employers do not probably take well to viewing a video of an applicant acting violently or recklessly in public. Some viewers of degenerate streamers actively participate in making them unemployable by exposing their personal details online and thus connecting their actual identities with their more questionable activities. It may only take a single act of public recklessness to become, in essence, unemployable in Finland. The most common reaction to this from the streamers themselves seems to be indifference or amusement; some have even stated to have sworn off a traditional working life years ago. A potent element of risk-tolerant behavior on multiple levels is therefore present in many instances of Finnish degenerate streaming, as described in the dark triad personality -theory.

Viewers' donation money sometimes comes with demands or comments intended to cause maximal strife with the public at large. In their quest for financial gain and notoriety, many degenerate streamers heed such advice without trepidation. For some streamers, providing degenerate content is in essence their profession. Not settling for government benefits alone, many degenerate streamers have been known to go to great lengths to indulge the more anti-social segment of their audience. Several of these instances have gone through the Finnish judicial system, making headlines in the press. This has so far included lawsuits for property damage, assault, coercion, drunk driving, and libel. Degenerate streaming obviously has a strong footing in self-interest at the expense of larger society. Their motto could indeed be "content at any cost".

Many vloggers and streamers, including Finnish degenerate streamers, often seem to strive to improve their financial status through their on-camera activities. The current western media landscape which often glorifies material possessions may contribute to inner conflicts about wealth acquisition in the case of many streamers and vloggers. An individual may be simply confused about how much psychological contentment material possessions actually grant.

Previous related research (e.g. Talvitie-Lamberg, 2014) has examined facets of personal video production such as the camera angles used and the level of eye-contact from the performers. In degenerate streaming these factors are often left to chance. The technical production values of a degenerate stream seem to be of modest importance both to the streamers and to their audiences alike. The most crucial technical aspect seems to be in simply capturing the moments of conflict or social disarray; failure to do so often riles up the audiences.

The general narrative of the streamers suggests a lifetime of mostly negative reinforcement from home, school, and other peers-groups. A degenerate streamer having positive relations with their out-groups seems to be an exception and not a rule. Even their close relatives seem to be either indifferent to their plight or try to shame them for it. Some of the younger streamers who live at home seem to be under

constant scrutiny by their parent or parents, to the extent they are essentially housebound. However, this does not stop them from switching on the web-camera and engaging in some type of overindulgence at any given moment — or stealing their mother's car for a joyride.

Degenerate streamers tend to develop a negative reputation within their home cities among emergency services, law enforcement, and other branches of public service. Some of them are rather frequently arrested and/or treated for injuries. Also, telephone harassment of hospitals and police stations by the streamers is known to take place from time to time. Although all of this primarily represents a small but unwarranted burden on society and some of its core functions, several viewers have voiced the opinion that the defiance behind these actions is actually commendable. For them, challenging the system in any way seems preferable to passive loitering on government welfare. These acts may represent a form of empowerment for the poor socioeconomic class from which degenerate streaming clearly stems. On a rare occasion, degenerate streamers are actually unfairly treated by police and security personnel. Some of the streamers have even received financial compensation from the state for false arrests and police brutality. By acting rebelliously a degenerate streamer can be seen questioning the origins of their predicament; did they fail in society or did their peers and greater society utterly fail them?

In the age of social media, everyone is more or less expected to offer a clean public image in order to succeed professionally and to an extent in other venues of life. Public displays of vulnerability by degenerate streamers may hold a unique appeal for the wider public. Degenerate streaming can be interpreted as a sincere act of human testimony. A cathartic aspect is certainly present in most of their broadcast activities. If nothing else, it takes a great degree of courage to publicly admit that one is suffering from serious mental health issues, even if it's done in the most blatant of ways.

The type of destructive content many degenerate streamers passionately strive for can be seen as a replacement for the substance sorely lacking in their lives. None of the five streamers in this thesis have a healthy relationship, children, constructive hobbies,

or a career path. The psycho-social building blocks for mental stability and happiness have eluded them for years or even decades. In rare instances during this research process streamers confessed to wanting more from life: a steady job, sobriety, or even just an apartment of their own without constant fear of eviction. However, as all of those things need varying amounts of prior positive experiences to manifest, they are reflected upon from a distant vantage point for the typical degenerate streamer. Incessant thoughts of pessimism and hopelessness seem to linger for them, sabotaging their yearning for improving their quality of life. Any attempts by society to break the younger streamers' destructive cycles of behavior are pushed aside in favor of drug abuse and video games. Older streamers often lament their lack of ambition in their youth, hoping they had put their energy in education instead of delinquency; during moments of sobriety their goals tend to be lofty and unrealistic at best. At some point Esko campaigned for a local political office, only to be shut down due to his audience sending video clips of his violent behavior to members of the city council.

5.2 Potential factors contributing to the sudden rise of degenerate streaming

According to a report by the Kalevi Sorsa Foundation (2020), in a global context Finland is doing fairly well when it comes to inter-generational social inequality. The report states that an economically solid family background is not a prerequisite for upward social mobility in Finland; however, existing deprivation often passes from one generation to the next and wealth inequality is also steadily growing. Professional and service sector positions have been slowly replacing working class occupations over the past few decades (Kalevi Sorsa Foundation, 2020).

The divide between a degenerate streamer and greater society is vast and seems to be maintained that way by both parties. Being a self-supporting working adult is held as an understandable baseline requirement for most members of society. While the Finnish left has made strides in the past decades to create and uphold a welfare-state, some right-wing proponents of a largely privatized economy have maintained that hard to employ adults should be approached with punitive measures as it pertains to access to government funds and services. For example, the so-called “active model” of employment was rushed into effect in 2018 in Finland without much local media

coverage. In it the benefits of an unemployed person were cut should they not manage to get hired or gain access to government employment programs. The active model received criticism primarily for ignoring the relatively low number of open positions and the geographic inequalities in the access to government resources (Kesä & Ylikojola, 2019). The active model was disbanded in January 2020. During the run of this model, members of Finnish parliament received two raises to their monthly salaries, which averaged roughly 6600 euros in 2019 (Parliament of Finland, 2019). The majority-right government also failed to cut tax-funded financial aid to businesses, which is estimated to linger between 8 and 9 billion euros annually (Pietarinen & Roslund, 2018); this aid is mostly given to larger corporations. The total budget for education in Finland was cut between 700 and 800 million euros during Sipilä's reign (Luukka & Nalbantoglu, 2018). This government was rightfully criticized for contributing to wealth inequality in Finland, in essence solidifying the unemployed (and the under-employed) as "the other" in the sociopolitical discourse. Despite their sometimes inclusionary public rhetoric, some of Finland's right-wing political actors seem to have a limited list of priorities, which often fail to include securing the futures of those from the lower economical classes. It is therefore probably not a coincidence phenomena like degenerate streaming surfaced during Sipilä's governance between 2015 and 2019 as poverty kept rising in Finland. Degenerate streamers, too, were subject to hearing about the choices Sipilä's government made through media and their peers.

Many prominent politicians may exhibit features of the dark triad. According to Chen et al. (2021, p. 578):

While Psychopathy and Machiavellianism exhibit few participatory effects, Narcissism is associated with higher levels of political interest and is also associated with lower levels of political knowledge. Thus, individuals scoring higher in Narcissism are not only more likely to be interested and involved in politics, but they are also less knowledgeable about politics in general.

The main differences between the various strata of world leaders and Finnish degenerate streamers seem to be cemented in early life experiences. Poverty

combined with a harsh or nonexistent upbringing may have robbed many dark triad individuals of their potential of becoming prime ministers and CEOs. Naturally, innate resilience is also a factor as the quality of one's upbringing does not always correlate with one's future quality of life.

The Finnish welfare state does obviously facilitate parts of degenerate streaming. A thin moral line exists between actual material needs of these streamers, and the need for excesses fueled by complacency. The welfare system does not explain why phenomena like degenerate streaming are becoming ever more popular. The means to protest a problematic status quo may be limited. For a degenerate streamer, the act of voting certainly does not seem to be a part of the solution; the values espoused by any established political party and those of the degenerate streamer simply do not meet. Degenerate streamers and their audience are generally not a voting bloc for either end of the political spectrum. Perhaps this is why they exist; the economically impoverished and socially disenfranchised still have a disproportionately small representation in Finnish politics and media. There is little actual upward economical mobility for many. For a degenerate streamer, society eventually represents the unreachable other and streaming bar fights may be an act of righteous rebellion. The daily social experience of those in the lowest economic classes in Finland offers fertile ground for unadulterated anomie. In a world where Instagram-accounts full of material glamour might symbolize the values of a considerable part of the population, a degenerate streamer represents a different, but equally valid experience. Some elements of this phenomenon are shared by the tens of thousands of young Finns currently living in poverty and long-term unemployment (Me-säätiö & THL, 2018).

5.3 The future of degenerate streaming

As a new phenomenon, it is difficult to predict how degenerate streaming and other more extreme forms of live streaming will evolve in the near future. The lifestyle espoused by degenerate streamers has many elements of unsustainability as the activity incorporates aspects of serious physical and social harm. As of 2021, some of the first wave of Finnish degenerate streamers debuting between 2017 and 2018 have

decreased their streaming output. Some of them chose to reduce the voracity of their filmed escapades due to being confronted by either violent criminal elements of the Finnish population (this representing an immediate threat they seem to be unable to counter) or by penalties imposed by the justice system. However, many degenerate streamers have made public announcements on social media denouncing their anti-social activities only to return to them within a few weeks. It seems as long as the potential root causes such as societal disenfranchisement are in place, the rewards of degenerate streaming are difficult to let go for many. An alternative to this type of activity is discussed rarely, but includes a streamer hoping to incorporate more normative activities into their lives, such as education and nearly any type of legitimate employment.

The main features of the degenerate streamer telefetish, as described by the dark triad, are not likely to dramatically evolve in the future. From the viewpoint of the streamers, the current degenerate streamer formula simply works. The on-going cultural fascination with the criminally insane in the arts (in such pop-culture franchises as Batman) further demonstrates the appeal of dark triad individuals in motion.

It can be argued a dark triad personality can be beneficial from a reproductive standpoint. In this context, sexual activity rarely results in longterm pair-bonding. Four out of the five streamers in this study expressed no desire to ever foster children. Some viewers and associates of these streamers have had children, but made little to no effort in raising them, more or less abandoning them altogether. However, some exceptions to these approaches were discovered during the many hours of interaction observed inside the community. The individuals who moved in with their significant others and had children expressed the sentiment of losing some of their earlier self-centered, self-destructive traits. Aging was also a factor in the cessation of anti-social behavior; this did not always correlate with raising children or having a steady life-partner. These perhaps more responsible individuals often take on a more passive, yet supportive role within the degenerate streamer community (as demonstrated by the typology of Minna, the matured confidante).

Committing to degenerate streaming might actually be a valuable phase in one's life. Many drawn to this activity express notions of painful solitude during their everyday life; taking drugs to lower one's inhibitions and venturing out into the world may offer them new experiences and ways to meet others. The social aspect offered by chatting with an often asinine and faceless audience may not be enough to satisfy one's social needs. The more lenient moments of degenerate streaming such as socializing with like-minded individuals can be beneficial to those involved. After all, the more dramatic and unruly moments of this type of streaming are rather few and far between. When looking at degenerate streaming as a temporary phase in an individual's life it can indeed provide socialization and a catalyst for emotional maturation.

The ranks of degenerate streamers are constantly being reinforced by new actors on Youtube, Twitch, and other similar platforms. However, becoming a well-known degenerate streamer is an arduous, time-consuming task, with very little financial reward in the beginning. Building a reputation for recklessness is a prerequisite for regular donation money and naturally requires a streamer follows up on the often hazardous requests being made. It is still likely degenerate streaming will grow as a phenomenon as it offers much to those with little to lose.

Celebrity-status, whether stemming from generally perceived positive or negative actions, is a viable source of income for some. Having one's public persona solidified as somehow relevant for tabloids and other media does offer financial opportunities. Whether Finnish degenerate streamers ever fully cross this threshold remains to be seen, but some of them may be consciously working towards this goal. What is apparent is more and more people have become aware of the phenomenon, especially among the younger generations. Degenerate streaming can be seen as a continuation on the genre of slapstick reality television, popular in the early 2000s and exemplified by tv-shows like Jackass and Dirty Sanchez. Instead of the mostly physical injuries common in the aforementioned television shows, engaging in degenerate streaming has more of an impact on one's social standing. Working outside of tv-network

funding, the events in degenerate streaming seem to be less controlled and thus less predictable.

5.4 Review of the research

A researcher is an instrument of inquiry when collecting and analyzing data during qualitative research. Potential biases may stem from a personal or professional background; various positive implications beneficial to the process may also be present. Reflecting on these factors is essential during a research project. Researchers should also state clearly whether they consider themselves an insider or outsider as it pertains to the group(s) being studied (Corrall, 2017).

According to Patton (2015, p. 523):

You need to be reflective and reflexive, monitoring your thought processes and decision-making criteria; being in touch with your predispositions, biases, fears, hopes, constraints, blinders, and pressures; observing yourself and learning about yourself and your analytical processes, cognitively and emotionally.

I wanted to give the five research subjects the possibility to represent the phenomenon of degenerate streaming in their own terms and through their own actions. Deciding early on to merely observe and not to engage in interaction with them I think I managed to sustain a level of objectivity until the end of the research period. Patton (2015) describes the concept of *naturalistic inquiry*, in which a phenomenon is allowed to exist uninterrupted inside the surroundings it naturally occurs in. Passive internet-based observation of phenomena offers a layer of near-complete invisibility for a researcher. I was able to study the culture of degenerate streamers without even making my presence known. Directing the course of these degenerate streams (as many members of their audience are keen to do) would have offered a vastly changed experience and thus resulted in a thoroughly different research project.

Patton (2015) has also formulated a framework for *triangulated reflexive inquiry*, which focuses on the researcher, the researched, and the audience (i.e. the recipients of the research and its analysis). The inquiry is to be executed using different sets of questions for each of the three groups in this framework (Patton, 2015). Some of these questions are presented in table 5.

The researcher	The researched	The audience
<i>How do I perceive those I have studied?</i>	<i>What shapes and has shaped their worldview?</i>	<i>How do they perceive me?</i>
<i>What shapes and has shaped my perspective?</i>	<i>How do participants know what they know?</i>	<i>How do I perceive them?</i>
<i>What do I do with what I have found?</i>		<i>How do these perceptions affect what I report, and how I report it?</i>

Table 5. A selection of questions used in triangulated reflexive inquiry (Patton, 2015).

I was quite aware of Patton's questions presented in table 5 throughout the research process. The hardest self-reflective task was to identify my potential biases towards the individuals I researched and their lifestyle. Degenerate streamers are a polarizing group; they can be either seen as victims or perpetrators as per their often considerable anti-social tendencies and a propensity for manipulation. I recognized my own values may have an influence on interpreting the phenomenon of degenerate streaming as well.

The main challenge posed by this research project was in the classification procedure for discovering the main themes in the data-set. Degenerate streamers do not announce their topics for discussion in advance. Their output is chaotic, often greatly influenced by their audience via chat-conversations. It was sometimes difficult to gauge if a specific theme corresponded more with a streamer or their audience. In the end, any topic which resonated with a streamer enough to warrant a potent enough response qualified as a theme relevant to the study. The pool of these themes turned out to be rather small, focusing mainly on the management of challenging emotions and life events. Those drawn to becoming a regular viewer of degenerate streaming often display many of the same personal issues as the streamers themselves, including

personality features constituting the dark triad. I feel I gained valuable skills at qualitative thematic classification, an approach I had not used much previously.

At first, the topic of degenerate streaming seemed somewhat alien to me. Analyzing the topic for several months yielded in increased understanding of prevailing socio-economical divisions in Finland. Degenerate streamers are mocked and othered constantly, apparently both during their on-screen and off-screen activities.

Throughout the months of research I gained insight that despite all of the negative connotations degenerate streaming might be a valuable phase in a struggling individual's life. Antisocial behavior can only be controlled to a degree in free societies. Ultimately this new sub-culture does offer at least some actual value to both those within and outside of the community. During my research I began to see many elements in the dark triad personality as more of a survival tool than something to be "cured" from. It has its time and place in the lives of many, including Finnish degenerate streamers. However, a person constantly manifesting the core dark triad traits (i.e. psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism) in civilized society is obviously likely to create problems both to themselves and others.

As I ventured further into researching the topic of degenerate streaming, I found myself highly curious about the audiences involved. Finnish degenerate streams seem to attract potentially tens of thousands of faithful individual viewers, spread rather evenly between the numerous active broadcasters. Initially I was going to include this group in my research to a greater degree. In the end I decided against this as I felt this might have gotten in the way of the core topic of the thesis.

5.5 Future research

Degenerate streaming as a phenomenon is currently not limited to Finland or even Europe. A scene is emerging on a wider scale. For one, North-America has its share of dozens of active degenerate streamers all using the same or similar digital platforms for this type of content (e.g. YouTube and Twitch). Potential future research topics for degenerate streaming include:

- How is Finnish degenerate streaming unique from the perspective of the global streaming scene?

- What are the wider societal implications of the growing popularity of degenerate streaming?
- Issues of intervention, regulation, and freedom of speech around degenerate streaming
- The ethical issues in framing degenerate streaming as a legitimate sub-culture
- “Trainwreck watchers” - the viewing audiences of degenerate streaming and other forms of live anti-social broadcasting

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Appendix. Images of Finnish degenerate streaming.



Image 1. Two Finnish degenerate streamers during a live broadcast with a donation goal bar in the upper right corner of the screen.

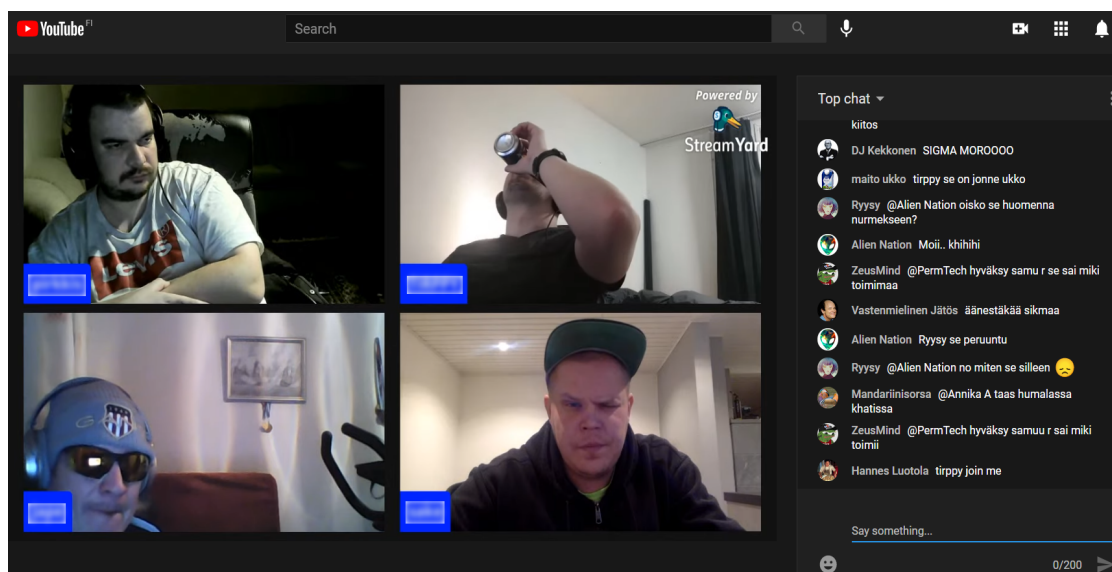


Image 2. A degenerate stream “multicast” with a chat-box for viewer interaction.